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BAT MAN



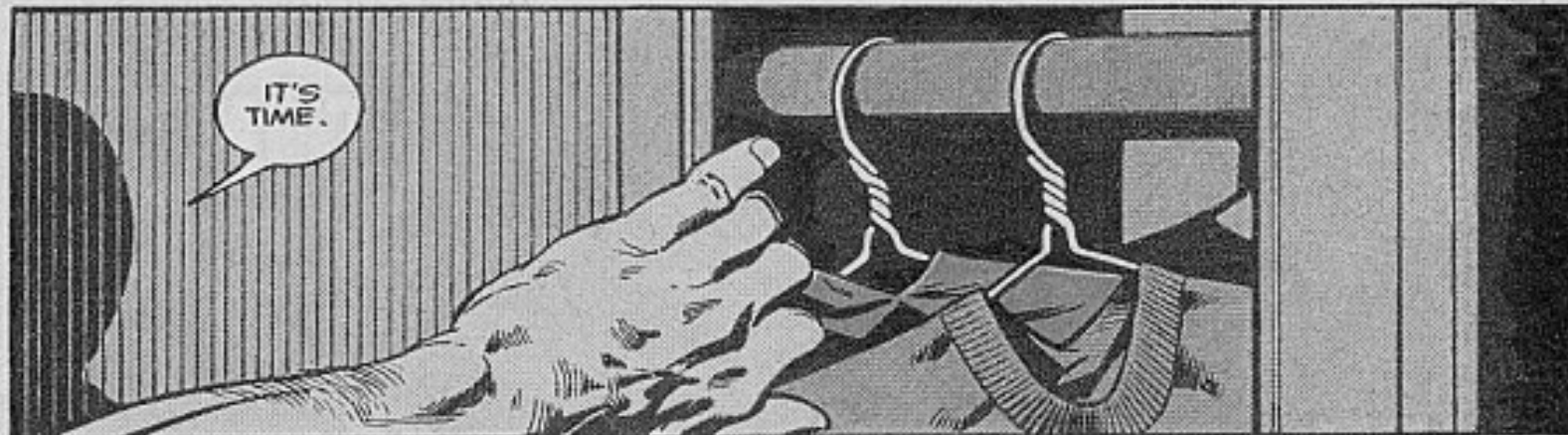
STRUGGLE
AS HARD AS YOU WANT,
BATMAN--YOU CAN
NEVER DEFEAT
YOURSELF!



**WHERE
THE
ACTION
IS!**

HANNIGAN
+
GIORDANO

C-182



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A Warner Communications Company

IT'S TRUE, WHAT
THEY SAY, DON'T
YOU AGREE?

THE CLOTHES
DO MAKE THE
MAN!

A CLIMACTIC EPISODE
IN THE EPIC LEGEND
OF THE

BAT MAN

HA HA HA HA HA

"THE DOUBLE LIFE OF HUGO STRANGE"

GERRY
CONWAY
WRITER

BEN OGA

ADRIENNE ROY

DON
NEWTON

ARTISTS

LETTERER

COLORIST

DICK
GIORDANO

LEN WEIN
EDITOR

NIGHT IN GOTHAM,
THE MOST ROMANTIC
TIME IN AMERICA'S
MOST ROMANTIC CITY...

BRUCE, YOU
KNOW HOW
PAINFUL MY
DIVORCE WAS.

IT WAS MONTHS
BEFORE I COULD
EVEN TALK ABOUT IT!

THAT WAS THE
PROBLEM,
REALLY-- HE AND
I COULDN'T TALK...

...AND SLOWLY,
THE SILENCE
CONSUMED OUR
MARRIAGE.

VICKI--? WHAT'S
WRONG?

BLAST
IT!

I'VE GOT TO
BE AT A SPECIAL
BUDGET MEETING
IN FIFTEEN
MINUTES.

CAN I MEET
YOU AT YOUR
HOUSE LATER
FOR A NIGHTCAP?

OF
COURSE.

GREAT. BYE!

THESE PAST FEW WEEKS--
SINCE I BECAME
EDITOR OF PICTURE
NEWS-- WE HAVEN'T
HAD MUCH TIME
TOGETHER...

AND YOU'RE
AFRAID WE'VE
LOST TOUCH.

AREN'T YOU
REALLY
WORRIED
ABOUT
SELINA?

SHE
LOVES
YOU, BRUCE.

I'M NOT SURE
I CAN COMPETE
WITH HER PASSION...
AND I DON'T WANT
TO LOSE YOU.

JUST
TRY.

WELL, BRUCE...
TURNABOUT
IS FAIR PLAY.

YOU RAN OUT ON
HER A FEW DAYS
AGO TO CHASE
SNOWMEN IN THE
HIMALAYAS*--

*LAST MONTH'S DETECTIVE 522. --Len.

-- SO IT'S ONLY RIGHT
THAT VICKI RETURN
THE FAVOR, EVEN
UNINTENTIONALLY.

I USED TO THINK
I WORKED HARD
WHEN I HEADED
UP THE WAYNE
FOUNDATION.

VICKI'S
ON THE
GO TWENTY
HOURS
A DAY.

WHERE
DOES SHE
GET HER
ENERGY?

MOMENTS LATER,
ON GOTHAM'S
NORTH RIVER DRIVE...

SELINA. I WAS BEING
GLIB WITH VICKI,
UNFAIRLY SO.

I'M NOT SURE
HOW I FEEL
ABOUT SELINA
KYLE--

--AND I'M EVEN MORE
CERTAIN THAN VICKI THAT
SELINA WON'T LONG LEAVE
OUR RELATIONSHIP
UNRESOLVED.

PROBLEMS.

SOMEHOW, I
HAVE TO
SIMPLIFY MY
LIFE BEFORE
IT-- EH?

WARMTH
AND CLOYING
SWEETNESS
ENVELOP HIM.

HIS EYES
CLOSE; HE
SHAKES OFF
A WAVE OF
DIZZINESS...

BETTER PULL
OVER BEFORE
I--

WHAT ON
EARTH?

WAYNE MANOR!

BUT HOW COULD
I HAVE DRIVEN
HOME WITHOUT
KNOWING IT?



HAND SHAKING,
HE TURNS HIS
KEY IN THE
FAMILIAR LOCK...

...AND IS GREETED
BY AN EQUALLY-
FAMILIAR SMILING
FACE...

GOOD EVENING,
SIR.



I TOOK THE
LIBERTY OF
POURING YOUR
TEA WHEN I
HEARD THE CAR
DRAW UP.

MS. VALE--?

VICKI... WILL
BE JOINING
US LATER,
ALFRED.

DO I LOOK--
A LITTLE
STRANGE
TO YOU?

A TRIFLE
PALE, SIR.

I MUST
SAY, I FEEL
A LITTLE
PEAKED
MYSELF... I
HEAR THERE'S
A FLU
GOING
AROUND.



MAYBE
THAT'S IT.

FEEL
SO DIZZY...

MY GOD.

THIS TEA--



--IT'S DISCOLORED.

SOMETHING
WRONG WITH
THE TEA--?



ALFRED, I'M
NOT THIRSTY,
AFTER ALL--



FORGIVE ME FOR
NOT MEETING YOU
AT THE
DOOR.

I WAS IN THE
KITCHEN--
-- FIXING
A SPOT
OF TEA.

BUT--

IS ANYTHING
WRONG,
MASTER
BRUCE?

YOU LOOK
A TRIFLE
PALE.

THIS IS SURREAL!
AM I HAVING
BLACKOUTS?

THAT MUST BE
IT-- SOME
KIND OF
DELAYED
STRESS
REACTION
TO TENSION.

EXCELLENT
EARL GREY,
ALFRED... AS
USUAL.

I THINK I'LL
GO UPSTAIRS NOW
... TAKE A SHOWER
... BEFORE VICKI
ARRIVES ...

VERY
GOOD, SIR.

WILL YOU AND
MS. VALE BE
WANTING A LATE
DINNER?

HAMM-CLICK

NO ... JUST
PUT OUT THE
TATTINGER '59
TO CHILL ...

... AND SET
SOME LOGS
ON THE FIRE
IN THE DRAWING
ROOM.

IT BEGINS.

BY THE
TIME YOU
GUESS THE
TRUTH,
BRUCE
WAYNE--

--YOU'LL
BE IN NO SHAPE
TO RESIST
YOUR INEVITABLE
DESTINY!

HAHA
HAHA

WAYNE MANOR.

VICKI!
I MEAN,
MS. VALE!

DIDN'T YOU
AND BRUCE
HAVE A
DATE
TONIGHT--?

TEMPORARILY
INTERRUPTED,
DICK.

MR. WAYNE...?
I THOUGHT...
ISN'T HE WITH
YOU?

ALFRED, WOULD
YOU TELL BRUCE
I'M HERE-- AS
PROMISED?

ALFRED, IF HE WAS
WITH ME, WOULD
I BE STANDING
HERE ASKING
YOU TO
ANNOUNCE
ME?

SO HE ISN'T
HOME.

MAYBE... HE WENT
SOMEWHERE ELSE... TO
SEE SOMEONE ELSE.







YOU'RE..
CHOKING..
ME!

YEAH,
THAT'S
THE IDEA.



NO!



BLOOD STAINS THE WHITE TILE FLOOR A BRISHT SCARLET, NO LONGER PUMPING FORCEFULLY AS A YOUNG HEART STILL...

SICK WITH HORROR, BRUCE WAYNE SWINGS AWAY--

--WONDERING IF HE'S LOST HIS MIND.

HI, BRUCE.

ALFRED TOLD ME YOU JUST GOT IN.

HOW ABOUT A QUICK GAME OF BACKGAMMON?

PICK--

YOU'RE ALIVE?

LAST I LOOKED, YEAH.

WHAT'S WRONG?

...WRONG...?

...WHAT COULD BE WRONG?

THIS IS A NIGHTMARE!

HEY PARTNER--

YOU DON'T LOOK SO WELL.

As BRUCE WAYNE STAGGERS INTO HIS BEDROOM, FOLLOWED BY HIS WORRIED FRIEND, A SOFT, ALMOST INAUDIBLE CLUCK SOUNDS FROM THE DESERTED BATHROOM...

... AS A HIDDEN TURNTABLE SLIPS INTO ITS NEW POSITION.

THAT WAS A MESSY ONE, SIR.

JUDGING BY MR. WAYNE'S BEHAVIOR, HOWEVER...

--I WOULD SAY THE STRAIN IS DEFINITELY BEGINNING TO HAVE AN EFFECT.

NATURALLY.

I'VE SPENT MONTHS PERFECTING THIS OPERATION.

EVERYTHING'S GOING LIKE... AHA... CLOCKWORK.

GET RID OF THAT THING, WILL YOU?

VERY GOOD, SIR.

WILL THAT BE ALL?



OF COURSE...



COME IN,
MISTER
WAYNE.

I WAS
WONDERING
WHEN YOU'D
FINALLY
SEEK ME
OUT.

WELCOME
TO MY
BATCAVE.

IF YOU'LL
GET
DRESSED,
WE'LL
BEGIN.



THIS ISN'T
THE BATCAVE...
AND THAT
HOUSE UP
THERE ISN'T
WAYNE
MANOR.

I KNOW
YOUR
VOICE--

--AND EVEN WITHOUT THE BEARD, I'D RECOGNIZE YOU, HUGO STRANGE.

RUPERT THORNE THINKS YOU'RE DEAD.

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD? I'M A GHOST.

ACTUALLY, I "DIED" PROTECTING YOUR SECRET, WAYNE.

OR SHOULD I SAY... OUR SECRET?

I'D CAPTURED YOU--LEARNED YOU WERE THE BATMAN--

"...AND THORNE, IN TURN CAPTURED ME.

"HIS THUGS TRIED TO BEAT THE SECRET OUT OF ME...

"BUT I WASN'T DEAD, OF COURSE USING YOGA METHODS, I'D SIMPLY SLOWED MY HEARTBEAT UNTIL IT WAS UNDETECTABLE...

"...BUT INSTEAD, THEY KILLED ME, OR SO THEY THOUGHT, BURYING ME IN GOTHAM RIVER INSIDE A WEIGHTED BARREL.

"AND ONCE I WAS SAFELY AWAY I FREED MYSELF, AND BEGAN PLANNING MY REVENGE ON RUPERT THORNE."

AND ME, STRANGE?

NOTHING, PERSONAL, WAYNE, BUT AFTER ALL THE PAIN I INVESTED IN KEEPING THE SECRET--

--I THINK IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT I BE THE BATMAN NOW.

YOU'RE INSANE.

IT'S BEEN SAID BEFORE.

DOES IT MATTER?

NOT AT ALL!

EXHAUSTED,
DISORIENTED--
WEAK--

--HE MISSES
HIS FIRST BLOW--

--AND SOON FINDS
HIMSELF FIGHTING
FOR HIS LIFE--

--AGAINST A MAN WHOSE
MADNESS MAKES HIM MORE
THAN A MATCH FOR THE
DAZED BATMAN.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, ABOVE...

HOWLING SIGNAL
COMING IN LOUD
AND CLEAR!

SHOULD BE
AROUND THIS
CURVE--

HUH?

WAYNE
MANOR--?

OR-- AN
EXACT
COPY!?

A black and white comic book panel showing Batman and a clone of himself in a physical struggle within the Batcave. Batman, on the left, is wearing his iconic suit and cowl, with a determined and intense expression. He is holding the clone by the neck and arm. The clone, on the right, is dressed in a similar but slightly different suit, with a more aggressive and menacing look. The background is filled with the jagged, rocky structures of the cave. The scene is dynamic, with strong lines and shading emphasizing the physical conflict.

WHY, STRANGE?

WHY THIS OBSESSION--
WHY GO TO ALL THIS
INSANE TROUBLE--

--TO--
IMITATE--
ME?

BECAUSE
YOU'RE THE
BEST,
BATMAN!

I BUILT THIS HOUSE--
THIS CAVE--MY MANDROIDS--
NOT ONLY TO CONFUSE YOU--

-- BUT ALSO TO TEST MYSELF--
SO I'D BE READY TO ASSUME
YOUR FALLEN MANTLE!

YOU'RE WRONG,
YOU SEE, I'M
NOT AN
IMITATION
OF YOU--





WHO IS THIS GUY?

HE LOOKS LIKE YOU-- MAYBE EVEN SOUNDS LIKE YOU, A LITTLE--

--BUT HE SURE DOESN'T ACT LIKE YOU!

ROBIN, MEET AN OLD ENEMY OF OURS--



--PROFESSOR HUGO STRANGE!

YOU THINK YOU'VE WON, DETECTIVE?

PERHAPS YOU HAVE.

BUT IF I'VE UNDERESTIMATED YOU AND YOUR WHELP--

--YOU HAVE SADLY UNDERESTIMATED ME!

I WIRED THIS DUPLICATED WAYNE MANOR FOR DESTRUCTION-- TO REMOVE ALL EVIDENCE OF MY EXISTENCE ONCE I'D TAKEN YOUR PLACE AS BRUCE WAYNE AND THE BATMAN--

-- BUT, BY HEAVEN,
IF HUGO STRANGE
CANNOT BE THE
BATMAN--

"NO ONE
CAN!"

CLICK!





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